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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-2/REA/NMJIC-J2//
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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J5/RUE//
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
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UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000219

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN (PERRY), INL (HOOKER)
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CENTCOM (OCKMAN)

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: MASS SNAR TX
SUBJECT: EMBASSY ASHGABAT'S COUNTERNARCOTICS PRIORITIES

Ref: A) STATE 19396

B) DUSHANBE 142

¶1. Per ref A, as the Department of Defense (DOD) takes on a more substantial role in providing counternarcotics (CN) assistance to Central Asia, Embassy Ashgabat is providing a prioritized list of prospective DOD-funded CN projects in Turkmenistan.

¶2. Border Crossing Checkpoint Upgrades: \$10 million

Currently two-out-of-five GOTX-identified KPP's (border crossing checkpoint) are being constructed with DOD money: Imamnazar (Afghan border), Altyn Assyr (Iranian border). Funding the additional three posts will help secure all border areas against the flow of narcotics and precursors. Anecdotal evidence has shown the UK Embassy's enhancement project of the Serhetebad KPP on the border with Afghanistan diverted traffic to the under-equipped Imamnazar KPP. A concerted effort to increase the functionality of the three additional KPPs, complemented by a program to train KPP staff, will support CN efforts in Afghanistan and thwart any potential for increased trafficking.

¶3. Border Liaison Project: \$2 million

Post continues to advocate for an integrated regional approach to the KPP projects. Cross-border training and communication are essential components for a long-term solution to regional CN challenges. Post proposes using the USG-constructed KPP project sites as models for cross-border communication systems and specific training directed at high-level officers in Ashgabat and on-site officers at each KPP. (Note: This proposal excludes the KPPs on the Iranian border. End Note.) The British Embassy intends to propose a similar project at the Serhetebad KPP on the border with Afghanistan. Harris radios have been recommended as a regional inter-border communication system.

¶4. Drug Control Authority (DCA): \$2 million

The UK government has pledged 250 thousand pounds (approximately \$490,000) to establish a UNODC-led DCA in Turkmenistan. Supplementing this solid financial foundation with a USG commitment to horizontally-integrate a CN law enforcement mechanism is compatible

with regional approaches to control narcotics and precursor trafficking.

¶5. COMMENT: All three proposals are reasonable and independently sustainable by the GOTX and/or regional cross-border partners for the long-term. These projects focus on providing immediate and short-term solutions to trafficking, but do not require continuous USG financing beyond program monitoring in the out years. End Comment.

JACOBSON